



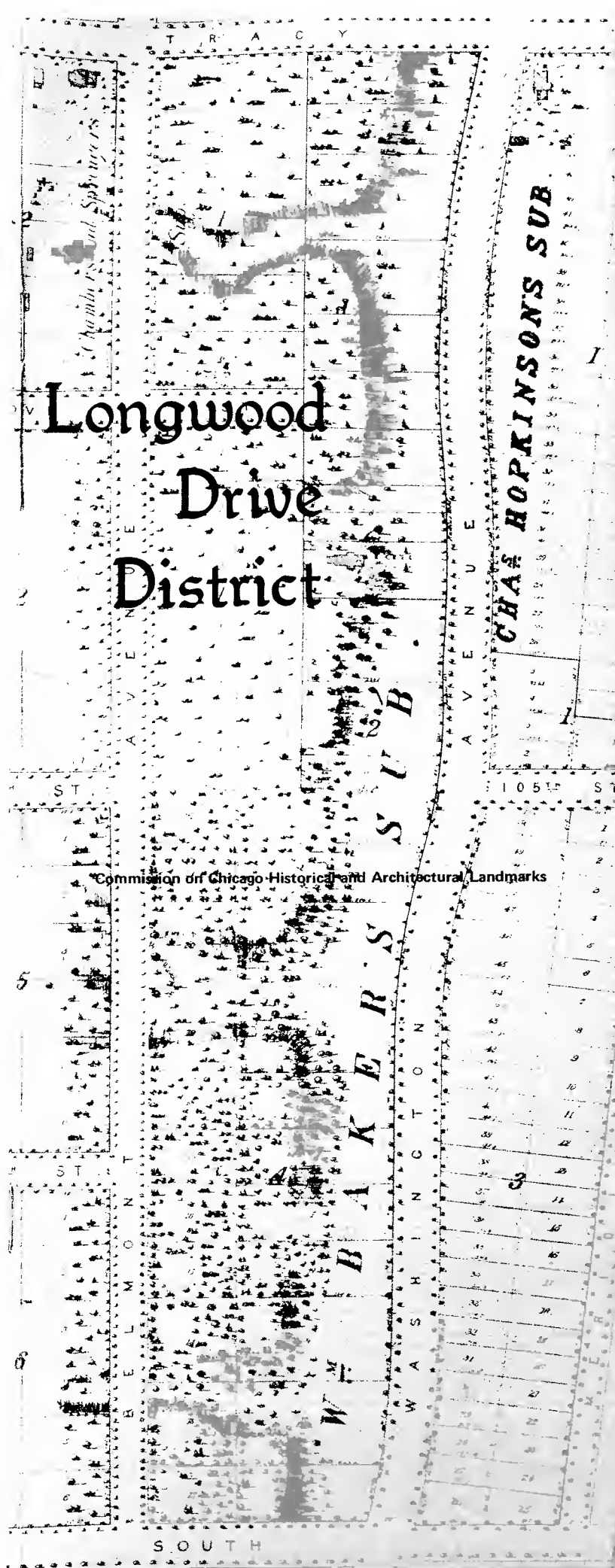
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(Cover) This 1885 real estate map shows the contours of the land along Longwood Drive (Washington Avenue) between 103rd Street (Tracy Avenue) and 107th Street (South Street).
(Courtesy of the Ridge Historical Society)



The "castle" at 103rd Street and Longwood Drive is one of the most prominent buildings in Beverly/Morgan Park. It was built in 1886 by real estate agent Robert C. Givins.
(Barbara Crane, photographer)

Longwood Drive District

In 1889, when Beverly Hills and Morgan Park were villages to the south of Chicago, boosters for the area claimed their communities were "much superior to other localities" because they were "near enough to Chicago and sufficiently far removed to afford all the blessings of a Suburban Home with all the conveniences and advantages of the city, far removed from all its objectionable features." Today the same promotional spirit exists in the community, now usually referred to as Beverly/Morgan Park. A recent local publication calls the area "the twin community on the southwest side of Chicago, combining the best of city and small town living," where "the richness of city life [is] combined with the tranquility of suburban life." Set on a ridge fifty to eighty feet above Lake Michigan, the area has a hilly quality unique in Chicago, and the topography provides an attractive setting for this pleasant residential community.

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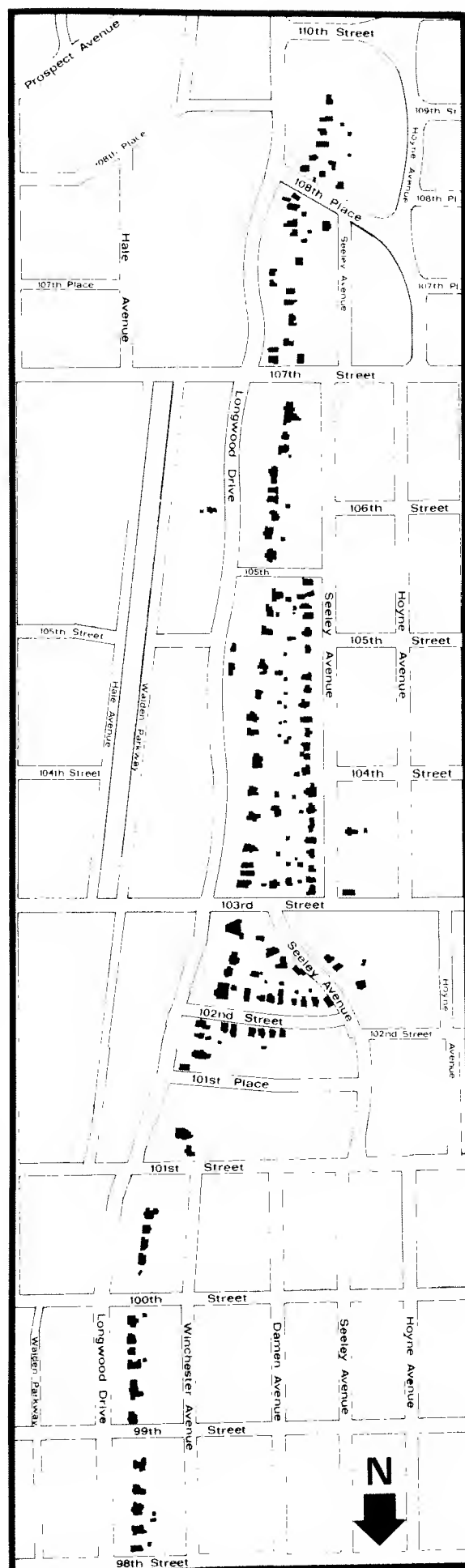
History of Beverly/Morgan Park

The high ridge, which features so prominently in the history of Beverly/Morgan Park, has long been known as Blue Island Ridge. When the ridge was seen from a distance by the first white settlers in the early 1800s, it looked like an island floating above the flat surrounding terrain. It was often covered by a blue mist, hence its name. At the end of the last glacial period, the ridge actually was an island in the large body of water that covered Chicago. The remnant of that body of water is Lake Michigan. The waters gradually receded, leaving the ridge surrounded by swamp land. The Pottawotomie Indians who hunted in the area blazed their trails on the high ground along the ridge. One such Indian footpath, which the early traders named the Vincennes Trail, was the primary route between Fort Vincennes, Indiana and Fort Dearborn in Chicago. After the Indians ceded their land rights to the United States in 1833 and were subsequently removed to the west, the Vincennes Trail continued to be the main thoroughfare between the Wabash Valley in western Indiana and Chicago, later becoming a major roadway which played an important role in the city's development.

Because the ridge was only about fifteen miles from Chicago's center, it was a convenient stopping place for traders using the Vincennes Trail. In 1832, the first permanent white settler, DeWitt Lane, built a log cabin at what is now the corner of 103rd Street and Seeley Avenue. He was joined soon afterward by two other pioneers, Thomas Courtney and Norman Rexford; the latter built a four-room log cabin at what is now 91st and Vincennes. Rexford was quick to see the advantage of his location and converted his home to a tavern in which he entertained travellers. The following year he moved south along the ridge and built an inn called The Blue Island near Thomas Courtney's home. Five years later, in 1839, settlement of the area began in earnest when John Blackstone purchased 3,000 acres of land, including Rexford's old home in which he opened his own tavern. The extent of the settlement is difficult to determine, but within five years there were a sufficient number of families to support a school.

In 1844, an English settler named Thomas Morgan bought Blackstone's home and all the land along the ridge from what is now 91st to about 115th Street. He raised sheep and cattle and eventually divided his land among his nine children. The ridge and the surrounding area were used primarily for agriculture. During this period, until the late 1860s, settlement was dispersed evenly through the area.

Serious development of the community began as a direct result of improved transportation arteries. The Vincennes Trail was relocated parallel to the tracks of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad (now known as the Rock Island Railroad) and upgraded in 1854, and it soon became a major roadway. The Rock Island Railroad had constructed its main track through the swampland east



(Opposite) Map of Longwood Drive District.

of the ridge in 1852. In 1859, this line was intersected at 103rd Street by the Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Chicago and St. Louis Railway (now part of the Penn Central). A settlement began around this junction. Both railroads soon developed supplementary services for the residents of the vicinity. In 1869-70, the Rock Island Railroad added "the dummy," a connecting line which would service newly subdivided areas to the west of the main line. This additional track spurred significant residential growth.

Concurrent with the development of rail services for the area, Thomas Morgan's lands were purchased from his heirs by F. H. Winston who transferred these holdings to the newly formed Blue Island Land and Building Company on April 26, 1869. A systematic program of subdivision and building began. The entire ridge and eastern lowlands were platted as the Washington Heights Subdivision. However, the southern portion from 107th to 119th streets was soon re-subdivided and named Morgan Park in honor of Thomas Morgan. Morgan Park experienced rapid growth as persons displaced by the Chicago Fire of 1871 moved into the area. The streets were laid out and designed by a British designer, Thomas F. Nichols, who introduced open park greens and winding streets into the overall plan, modeling it after an English park. The lowland was upgraded and drained, and sewer construction began in 1873. By 1882, Morgan Park was incorporated as a village and continued to grow. Chicago professionals were able to commute easily to and from work by means of the Rock Island Railroad, and the railroad itself was a source of employment in the community. The establishment of the Chicago Bridge and Iron Works in 1887 provided another major employer in the community and helped provide a stable economy for the village.

The northern part of the Blue Island Land and Building Company's lands was populated more slowly than Morgan Park. The Village of Washington Heights was incorporated in 1874, and most of the growth clustered around the train stations at 99th and Prospect, 103rd, and 107th streets. Prospect Avenue was laid out and subdivided by the Blue Island Land and Building Company and became the major residential street. Two of the earliest families to settle in this area, primarily pasture land, were the Barnards and Lackores. The Barnards continued to farm while the Lackores ran various businesses.

In 1889, the Rock Island Railroad relocated the "dummy" track so that it joined the main line at 89th Street instead of 97th Street. At the time, the railroad company put the name Beverly Hills on the 91st Street station, a name suggested by a prominent neighborhood resident who was from Beverly, Massachusetts. It was this new route that triggered most of the growth of the area north of 97th Street. In 1890, the villages of Morgan Park and Beverly Hills were annexed to Chicago.

The Development of Longwood Drive

An 1874 map of the village of Washington Heights shows approximately a dozen farms in the area between 95th and 107th streets. Most early residences and businesses were centered around the junction of the Rock Island and Pittsburgh-St. Louis railroads, with a few homes scattered along the roadways leading away from the junction. 103rd Street, one of the earliest residential streets, led west from the junction, crossing Longwood Drive (then Washington

Many of the homes on the ridge, here seen on Longwood Drive looking south from 99th Street, take advantage of this unique topo-

graphical feature and are well-sited on spacious wooded lots. (Timothy Barton, photographer)



Avenue) before ascending the ridge. Longwood Drive followed the base of the ridge. At that time, the ridge was covered with wild flowers and fruit trees, and farm animals grazed in the uncultivated spaces. Patterned residential development had not yet begun in earnest in this area of Beverly/Morgan Park.

By the late 1880s, most of the farmland had been subdivided and was being developed with modest suburban dwellings. In the lowlands east of the ridge, long narrow lots predominated. But on the west side of Longwood Drive, the land was divided into deep lots on which residents could build spacious homes, taking advantage of the topography, the view from the ridge, and the surrounding landscape. The size of the properties and degree of open space produced a neighborhood with a unique character. Today, ninety years later, while there are many more homes in the community, the early character of the neighborhood has been maintained, making Longwood Drive one of the most impressive residential streets in Chicago.

The Architecture Along Longwood Drive

One of the most prominent homes built along the ridge is at the corner of 103rd Street and Longwood Drive. It was built in 1886 for Robert C. Givins, a real estate dealer who developed portions of Beverly Hills and Morgan Park. Following a trip to Ireland, Givins conceived the idea of building a house in Beverly Hills similar to a castle he had seen on the banks of the River Dee. After designing the structure himself, Givins had limestone blocks hauled from the quarries near Joliet to simulate the stone of the original castle. The house he built is a three-story structure with towers and battlements. Givins and his family lived there for almost twenty years. The "castle" had fifteen rooms, some designed with particularly high ceilings so that Givins could hang his collection of European tapestries on the walls. The second owner of the castle added a stone porte-cochere on the north side of the building. In the early 1940s, the castle became the property of the Beverly Unitarian Church. The church has since remodeled the interior and built an addition on the north side of the building. Still used as a Unitarian Church, the castle is Beverly/Morgan Park's most unusual building.

Two of the earliest homes on the ridge above Longwood Drive are located in the 10300-block of South Seeley Avenue. The house at 10302 Seeley was originally the home of the Springer family. The Springers, along with the Chambers family who built the house at 10330 Seeley, subdivided the block. The Chambers house employs many features of the Italian Villa style. The most distinctive element of the style is the combination of a tall tower with an L-shaped floor plan. Other characteristics seen in the house are the smooth wall surfaces; the tall, round-headed windows with decorative triangular pediments; and the ornamental bargeboard under the front eaves. The Springer house, built in the Carpenter's Gothic style, is a more modest dwelling. Steeply pitched gables are a prominent element of this style, and they are used repeatedly on this house: the form of the double-gabled roof is



This house at 10330 South Seeley Avenue was built in the 1870s by the Chambers family. Its L-shaped plan, the tall tower, smooth wall surfaces, and decorative exterior woodwork are characteristic of Italianate architecture.
(Barbara Crane, photographer)

repeated in the mitered window hoods and again above the porch entry. Gothic trefoils within the window hoods are another reference to the medieval Gothic architecture from which Carpenter's Gothic drew some of its inspiration. Both the Springer and the Chambers houses were built in the early 1870s, and they are typical of the modest suburban dwellings that were constructed at the time.

Nearby at 10200 South Longwood Drive, Horace E. Horton built a grand home. Horton was the founder of the Chicago Bridge and Iron Company, which was started in 1887 in a small wooden shed at 105th Street just east of the Rock Island Railroad. It rapidly grew into an international concern, and by 1889 it was sufficiently profitable to allow Horton to build this shingle-covered Colonial revival style home. The studied symmetry of the facade, the large balconied portico, and the Palladian windows on the first floor are characteristics of this style.

The house at 1942 West 102nd Street illustrates the Queen Anne style, popular throughout the United States from 1880 to 1900. Asymmetrical facades with a variety of forms, textures, materials, and colors make the Queen Anne a visually appealing style, and its striking qualities are evident in the house on 102nd Street. The house has a large front bay topped by a gable with a small dormer in the roof repeating the form of the larger gable. Although it is basically a simple frame structure covered with clapboard siding, the house has a variety of well-preserved decorative features. The built-in flower boxes on the front bay, the fish-scale shingles, lathe-turned porch posts, and the radiating sunbursts in the fretwork above the porch and in the brackets under the front gable all serve to enliven this quaint cottage.



An old photograph of what is now the rectory of St. Barnabas Church. The house was built for lumber merchant E. L. Roberts in the late 1880s. Comparison of the photograph with the house today shows that subsequent owners of the Queen Anne structure have maintained much of its original appearance.
(Courtesy of the Ridge Historical Society)

The Shingle style simplified many features of Queen Anne architecture. The house at 10324 South Longwood Drive, for example, has a less complex roof pattern and more uniform wall surfaces than the Roberts house pictured above. Despite the implication of the Shingle style label, many homes were covered with thin wood clapboards rather than shingles. The clapboards used here emphasize the horizontality of the design.
(Barbara Crane, photographer)



Another Queen Anne style residence is located at 10134 South Longwood Drive. Built in the late 1880s for lumber merchant E. L. Roberts, it is an imposing, three-story structure, well sited on a spacious lot atop the ridge. The massing of this house, enhanced by the elevated location, gives the house a distinct visual appeal. Its large hipped roof is intersected by an octagonal bay on the south elevation and by a gable on the east. In typical Queen Anne fashion, the house has a variety of window openings, including a peaked-roof dormer to the south, two smaller eyelid dormers, and rounded window reveals in the gable that fronts on Longwood Drive. This house is currently used as a rectory for Saint Barnabas Church. Its interior has been largely remodeled, but the outside retains its nineteenth-century appearance and is beautifully maintained.

As attractive as Queen Anne designs are, their principal significance lies in the openness of their interior plans which contrasted sharply with the box-like room configurations



The long low lines of Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie school designs, seen here at 9914 South Longwood Drive, are particularly sympathetic to the outline of the ridge.
(Courtesy of The Art Institute of Chicago)

that dominated residential design until the late nineteenth century. Asymmetrical floor plans that produced free-flowing spaces were important features of the Queen Anne and its offshoot, the Shingle style. The Shingle style, which takes its name from the uniform covering of shingles on portions of the exterior walls, is an American adaptation of Queen Anne architecture, which drew from a number of English precedents. The use of shingles and other elements such as gambrel roofs, taken from American colonial designs and applied to Queen Anne forms, gave Shingle style residences a far different look than any European structures. From the exterior, Shingle style facades appear to be thin skins stretched taut over the irregular interior spaces. This feature is seen in the house at 10324 Longwood Drive. The rounded contours of the second-story bay windows, and the curved window reveals in the front gable, and the molded front porch and its roof all seem to be swelling from the expanse of the interior spaces.

The sweeping line that continues down from the high front gable is another distinct component of this style. Despite the replacement of its original sheathing with aluminum siding, this house is a good illustration of the basic form of the Shingle style.

Shingle style designs generally have a horizontal emphasis resulting from the arrangement of windows and the placement of shingles in horizontal bands. This horizontality, coupled with the asymmetrical and free-flowing floor plans, was a major influence on Frank Lloyd Wright in developing his Prairie designs. An excellent example of the Prairie style is the house Wright designed for Robert Evans in 1908 at 9914 South Longwood Drive. In his work, Wright rejected historical styles and traditional decoration in favor of plans and ornamental designs that were based on straightforward geometric shapes. The central portion of the Evans house is essentially a cube containing the living and dining rooms and kitchen on the first floor and the bedrooms on the second. From this cube, the house extends into a cruciform plan with an enclosed porch to the south, a covered driveway on the north, and a wing that originally contained the servants' quarters at the rear of the house. The design has a strong horizontal emphasis, reinforced by the dark trim along the roof line and below the windows. The house was originally surfaced with stucco and wood; a subsequent owner resurfaced the Longwood Drive facade with a stone veneer.

Although the Evans house is an expansive and elaborate structure, its central cubic form and floor plan derived from Wright's design for "A Fireproof House for \$5,000." The design, which appeared in the April, 1907 issue of the *Ladies' Home Journal*, represented Wright's attempt to make available in a small inexpensive house those characteristics that distinguished his Prairie houses, including the low, broad chimney; the flat or gently hipped roof; the central fireplace around which the floor plan revolves; the outside walls which are firmly anchored to the ground by a low stone or cement platform; and a continuous band of casement windows under wide eaves. The integration of these concepts into a moderately priced house proved successful, and the design was the basis for many subsequent projects of Wright and other Prairie school architects, including Walter Burley Griffin.

Griffin designed a number of homes in Beverly. Thirteen homes in the area, twelve of which are still standing, can be attributed to plans executed by Griffin. Most of these homes are located on 104th Place between Prospect Avenue and Wood Street. Griffin received most of the commissions for these designs either directly from or through associations with Russell L. Blount, an employee of Continental Bank and real estate developer. The house at 1950 West 102nd Street was built in 1912 for a client of Blount's, but the agreement was cancelled and Blount decided to move into the house himself. It is a two-story bungalow finished in stucco and wood, with distinctive flaring eaves under its two gabled roofs. Architectural historian Paul Sprague has noted that all of the ground floor plans for Blount's Griffin-designed houses, including this house, are based on Wright's designs for "A Fireproof House for \$5,000." The living and dining rooms in the plan form a continuous L-shaped space with a central fireplace. Only



In 1911, Harry N. Tolles commissioned Walter Burley Griffin to design this house at 10561 South Longwood Drive. It is one of thirteen homes that Griffin designed in Beverly, most of which are concentrated on 104th Place between Wood Street and Prospect Avenue. (Barbara Crane, photographer)

the enclosed kitchen is separated from this flow of space. The house built at 10561 South Longwood Drive for Harry N. Tolles in 1911 was also designed by Griffin and is similar in form and plan to the house on 102nd Street.

The Prairie school was an influential style of architecture in Beverly/Morgan Park. More than twenty-five homes were built with Prairie elements incorporated into their design. Among the practitioners of the style whose work is represented here are the firms of Thomas Tallmadge and Vernon Watson, Hermann von Holst and James Fyfe, and Robert Spencer and Horace Powers.

At about the time that the Tolles and Blount houses were constructed another modest house was erected at 10838 South Longwood Drive. The owner, Ralph Everett Wilder, was a well-known cartoonist for the *Chicago Record-Herald*. His move to Longwood Drive reflected the growing popularity of the street with the city's successful professionals. The founder of the Rotary Club International, Paul P. Harris, built his home at 10856 South Longwood.

In the 1920s, more large homes were constructed on Longwood Drive. Many of these homes were built in the revival styles of architecture that supplanted the popularity of the Prairie style. One such house belonged to the Frank R. Anderson family and later became the home of John S. McKinlay, president of Marshall Field & Company. It is now owned by Chicago State University for use by the university president. This home, at 10400 South Longwood Drive, is an example of Renaissance revival architecture. It was designed by O. J. Murray and built in 1924. Another impressive home was built at 10616 South Longwood Drive (also 10621 South Seeley). It is a three-story brick house designed in the English manor style for the Herbert Graver family. The architect was John Heatherington, the first of three generations of a family of local architects. The Ridge Historical Society is currently housed in this 1920s mansion.



Typical of the larger dwellings erected in Beverly/Morgan Park are these two homes at 10415 South Seeley Avenue (above) and at 10700 South Longwood Drive (below).
(Barbara Crane, photographer)



The architecture along the ridge is a rich mixture of the building styles that were popular from 1870 to 1930. Well maintained over the years, these comfortable homes bespeak the quality of life along Longwood Drive sixty years ago, and they remain much the same today, making the district a truly pleasant and unique residential area within Chicago's limits.

The Commission on Chicago Historical and Architectural Landmarks was established in 1968 by city ordinance, and was given the responsibility of recommending to the City Council that specific landmarks be preserved and protected by law. The ordinance states that the Commission, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor, can recommend any area, building, structure, work of art, or other object that has sufficient historical, community, or aesthetic value. Once the City Council acts on the Commission's recommendation and designates a Chicago Landmark, the ordinance provides for the preservation, protection, enhancement, rehabilitation, and perpetuation of that landmark. The Commission assists by carefully reviewing all applications for building permits pertaining to designated Chicago Landmarks. This insures that any proposed alteration does not detract from those qualities that caused the landmark to be designated.

The Commission makes its recommendations to the City Council only after extensive study. As part of this study, the Commission staff prepares detailed documentation on each potential landmark. This public information brochure is a synopsis of various research materials compiled as part of the designation procedure.